



I am experiencing pain, is this normal?

Pain usually occurs when there is damage to your body and can be a sign that you have an illness or injury. Many people with lung cancer experience some form of pain. There can be many reasons for pain and in order for your pain to be managed effectively you need to be accurately assessed by your cancer doctor.

Some people experience pain after treatments for cancer and understandably worry that it is a sign that the cancer has come back or has spread. This is not necessarily the case as many people experience pain, not caused by cancer.

If your pain is because you have had surgery for lung cancer, please see our *Surgery for lung cancer* booklet for more information. Visit www.roycastle.org/ayqpack or call our free helpline on **0333 323 7200 (option 2)**.

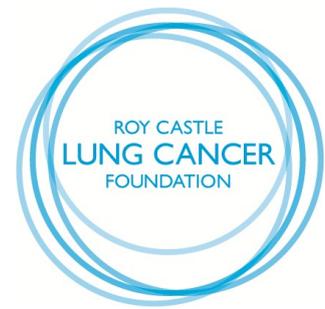
What can help my pain?

Pain can usually be managed with a variety of different treatments and this will depend if the pain is mild, moderate or severe. For mild pain, you may be prescribed a mild painkiller (called an analgesic) like paracetamol or a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug like aspirin, ibuprofen or diclofenac sodium. For moderate pain, you may be prescribed a weak opioid drug like codeine or tramadol. For severe pain, you may be prescribed a strong opioid painkiller like morphine, oxycodone, fentanyl or diamorphine.

Drugs to help manage pain can cause side-effects and it's important that you tell your cancer doctor or lung cancer nurse specialist. Common side-effects can include constipation, sickness, nausea, drowsiness, feeling tired and dry mouth. Other treatments to help manage pain can include chemotherapy/radiotherapy or perhaps complementary therapies such as acupuncture and relaxation techniques. Some people with cancer will need to take painkillers regularly to control the pain. It's important not to let pain build up until it's severe.

Will I have to take morphine?

You might feel frightened about taking morphine as it is sometimes thought of as being linked to death and addiction. This is not true - it is a very useful painkiller and can also help reduce breathlessness. You should still be able to carry out most day-to-day activities such as driving. However, morphine can at times make you drowsy, especially when you first start taking it. Do not drive if you feel at all drowsy.



How will I cope with the pain?

Getting medical help to control your cancer pain is very important. The best thing you can do is let your healthcare team know you are in pain. Feelings of fear, anxiety, depression and lack of sleep can increase pain and add to your suffering.

Talking about your pain can help. Don't be afraid to let the people close to you know that you are in pain. Having strong emotions about your pain is normal and is to be expected. You may feel angry about having pain and how it affects your quality of life or anxious that the pain won't go away. Once your pain has been managed many of these feelings will go away. Your cancer doctor or lung cancer nurse specialist may be able to refer you to counselling services, to help you to feel more in control and help you to cope.

The main thing is that you don't feel alone. Even if you don't have close family and friends around to help you, other people can help. Let your lung cancer nurse specialist know if you need support.

"If you're having a good day, enjoy it and if you're having a bad day, think of the good days."

Ann

GIVING HELP AND HOPE

The charity has two aims:

Supporting people living with lung cancer - Working closely with lung cancer nurses, we provide information, run lung cancer support groups and offer telephone and online support. Our patient grants offer some financial help to people affected by lung cancer.

Saving lives - We fund lung cancer research, campaign for better treatment and care for people who have lung cancer, and raise awareness of the importance of early diagnosis. Our lung cancer prevention work helps people to quit smoking and encourages young people not to start smoking.

Call us on 0333 323 7200 (option 2)

This information has been taken from the following sources:
Lung cancer—answering your questions: Managing lung cancer symptoms 2014